

DETAILED ACTION

Examiner's Statement of reason for Allowance

1. The Examiner agrees with the BPAI DECISION ON APPEAL decided on December 01, 2009.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Andrew T. Spence on March 15, 2010.

The application has been amended as follows: claim 1 has been amended:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing an inventory of at least one product of a supplier that is provided to at least one customer, wherein the at least one customer is capable of receiving and shipping out the at least one product, said method comprising a plurality of steps one or more of which are performed by at least one processing unit configured to perform the respective one or more steps, said plurality of steps comprising:

creating an open purchase order comprising an acceptable inventory range bounded by a lower limit and an upper limit for each product that the supplier provides to the at least one customer;

storing a supply amount of the at least one product in a storage unit that is remote from the supplier and proximate to the customer;

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maintaining, using the at least one processing unit, a product inventory count for each product representative of the amount of the product that is maintained in inventory by the at least one customer, said maintaining comprising:

decreasing the product inventory count as the at least one customer ships out the respective product; and

increasing the product inventory count as the at least one customer receives additional amounts of the respective product, wherein the at least one customer receives the additional amounts from the supply amount stored in the storage unit; and

monitoring, using the at least one processing unit, the product inventory count at a supplier location such that the supplier is capable of detecting when product inventory counts approach the respective lower limits, wherein the product inventory count approaches the respective lower limit when the product inventory count falls below a notification level greater than the lower limit and between the lower limit and the upper limit, and wherein the supplier location is remote from the customer location.

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to GARCIA ADE whose telephone number is (571)272-5586. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30AM - 5PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew S. Gart can be reached on 571.272.3955. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Matthew S Gart/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3687

Garcia Ade
Examiner
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